



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, January 18, 2006

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MEXICAN MAN SENTENCED TO 8 YEARS IN PRISON FOR ALIEN SMUGGLING AND ASSAULT

TUCSON, Ariz. – Alfredo Cruz-Burrueal, 24, of Mexico, was sentenced here yesterday to eight years in prison, to be followed by three years supervised release, by U.S. District Judge John M. Roll. On October 13, 2005, Cruz-Burrueal pleaded guilty to one count each of Transport Illegal Aliens for the Purpose of Commercial Advantage and Private Financial Gain and Assault on a Federal Officer.

Shortly after midnight on January 16, 2005, Cruz-Burrueal was driving a pick-up truck containing at least 28 individuals near Buenos Aries National Wildlife Refuge near Sasabe, Ariz. The defendant was driving with his headlights off in order to avoid detection by law enforcement. When Border Patrol agents detected the vehicle, Cruz-Burrueal made an abrupt U-turn in order to flee to Mexico at a high rate of speed despite his pick-up truck being overloaded with people.

Cruz-Burrueal continued to attempt to avoid apprehension by swerving the vehicle to avoid deployed spike strips and then by driving the truck directly towards two Border Patrol vehicles, ramming the vehicles in an attempt to force an escape. One of the vehicles was occupied by a Border Patrol agent. One of the illegal aliens in the defendant's vehicle was thrown from it prior to the collision and had to be air-lifted to a hospital. In a further attempt to avoid responsibility for his actions, the defendant attempted to push his co-defendant and pregnant girlfriend, Karen Ariana Moreno-Silva, behind the steering wheel in an attempt to make her appear to be the driver. Cruz-Burrueal admitted to being under the influence of methamphetamine at the time of the offenses.

Finally, Cruz-Burrueal admitted that this was his tenth occasion smuggling illegal aliens into the United States and that he was to be paid \$250 for each of the illegal aliens on this occasion. His prior criminal history includes possession of a controlled substance and illegal entry on two occasions.

Co-defendant Karen Ariana Moreno-Silva was sentenced on January 3, 2006 to 24 months in prison on the conspiracy charge. Co-defendant Jose Esteban Nunez-Ortega is scheduled to be sentenced in Tucson, Ariz. on March 24, 2006.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the U.S. Border Patrol. The prosecution was handled by Danny N. Roetzel, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-05-00230-TUC-JMR (CRP)
RELEASE NUMBER: 2006-012(Cruz-Burrueal)

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